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Communication Styles and Methods for Promoting and Enhancing Faculty Professionalism in  
the Workplace

Abstract

The effective and efficient workplace communication lies in knowing the right tools and appropriate channels for particular circumstance. Any member of the organization should have ability to communicate interpersonally that exhibits ability to adapt to diversified workplace, culture and social systems. Communicators have styles that reflect their characteristics as active, connective, thinking and logical. In addition, communicators can be categorized on their communication methods as director, expresser, harmonizer and thinker. To this effect, this study which aimed to determine the professionals' assessment of the aforementioned variables yielded the impressions that most communicators are logical in their communication style; hence, they are thinkers in their method of communication. The significant difference between the respondents' communication methods and style shows the versatility of the respondents to adjust communications styles and methods to the organization's structure and culture as they engage in interrelated communication.

Keywords: Communication Styles and Methods, Workplace Communication, Professionalism in the Workplace

## Chapter 1

### 1. Introduction

The ability to communicate is an essential life skill. Everyone has a style to naturally adapt and develop to suit the different environments where he is operating in. Oftentimes the word “communication is misunderstood despite its relevance and meaning.. It’s a word that can be the difference between success and failure, and a word that can lead to unraveling as professionals and as an organization. The value of communication is not totally dependent on the words that are used but in the timing and the manner that the words are imparted. Any communicator should sound pleasant. There must be rhythm that complements the purpose of the message. The key element of communication understands; the connection being built up to generate interest, and maintain relationship [1]. Human acts are incomplete without communications. Anyone is prone to difficulties if communication etiquette is not well practiced. To talk properly is a must to professional and personal lives [2].

Although individual’s communication style is discretionary, behaviors adjust to other communication styles to get adapted in a particular situation. Such flexibility is a requirement for the workers who are involved in a diversified community. A successful intercultural communication plays a vital role in any organization despite of varying cultural backgrounds and preferences. Workplaces usually comprise of employees from different walks of life where verbal and non verbal communication can be used to different norms. The delivery of message matters a lot. Organizations usually recognize those who contribute for the sustainability and success of their interests. The ones commonly appreciated are those with the command of good communication skills and those who are subscribing to the rules and policies of the organization. A combination of these characteristics brings out a rapport in the workplace [3].

Failure to communicate effectively is usually caused by stress due to interpersonal difficulties. There are communication styles that can lead to problems. Ineffective workplace communication may lead to communication gaps; consequently, it causes confusion, waste of time and reduces productivity.

Misunderstandings that divide between and among people can be avoided by open communication. Another important aspect to have effective workplace communication is taking into consideration the different backgrounds of employees. While diversity enriches the environment, it can also cause communication barriers. Difficulties arise when a coworker's cultural background that includes communication style rationalizes an advantage of one to another [4].

Schools in Bahrain comprise of faculty from different countries. For certain, these teachers have different cultures and backgrounds. The UOB distribution of load according to nationality shows that 64% is Bahraini, 18% is other Arab and 18% in non Arab. UOB has 125 part time faculty where 55.6% is Bahraini and 46.4% is non Bahraini [5]. ASU and AMAIUB lecturers are from several nationalities including Bahrainis, Arabic nationalities, Indians, British, Canadian, etc. as well.

Morgan (2014) said that the key to professional success is thru effective interaction. Communication skills can impact success regardless of designation or position in an organization. There are communication complexities. Sharing information is more than words, but it is the manner and the timing that count most of the time plus the body kinesics and the tone and quality of voice [6]. To improve interaction, she emphasized that a communicator should be aware of the following dos and don'ts:

- Know the outcome
- Build a reputation

- Avoid flaunting power and intellect
- Be confident
- Show awareness of others
- Consider timing
- Master the art of listening
- Earn respect and trust

On the other hand, Conrad (2014) believes that bad communication practices cause a majority of work problems. Relationships thrive on communication. Despite the advent of communication routes online, people love to talk in a group or in an organization. Communication is the lifeblood of an organization and, without it; things will not get done [7].

The article focuses on communication evaluation and measurement in corporate sector. It mentions the communication evaluation as performance indicator in business for communication professionals and also discusses the categories of performance indicators to evaluate the communication performance in comprehensive manner. It includes the measurement of efficiency of communication work, communication activity and measurement of relationship elements with stakeholders or constituents [8].

#### Statements of the Problem

This study will identify the communication styles that are effective in a workplace to bring faculty into assessment of their communication skill status as professionals. Specifically, it will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of the following:

- 1.1 Age

- 1.2 Gender
- 1.3 Years in the academe
- 1.4 Educational attainment
  
2. How do the respondents assess their communication styles with regards to the following categories that reveal the respondents' characteristics?
  - 2.1 Active
  - 2.2 Connective
  - 2.3 Thinking
  - 2.4 Logical
  
3. How do the respondents assess their communication method as characterized to the following categories of a communicator:
  - 3.1 Director
  - 3.2 Expresser
  - 3.3 Harmonizer
  - 3.4 Thinker
  
4. Is there a significant difference on the computed means of the aforementioned variables when paired and grouped accordingly?
  - 4.1. Is there a significant difference between the respondents' assessment of their communication style to their profile?
  - 4.2. Is there a significant difference between the respondents' assessment of communication methods to their profile?
  - 4.3. Is there a significant difference among the respondents' communication methods, communication styles and their profile?

5. What are the implications of the of the respondents' communication styles and methods as professional communicators in the workplace?

#### Assumptions and Hypotheses

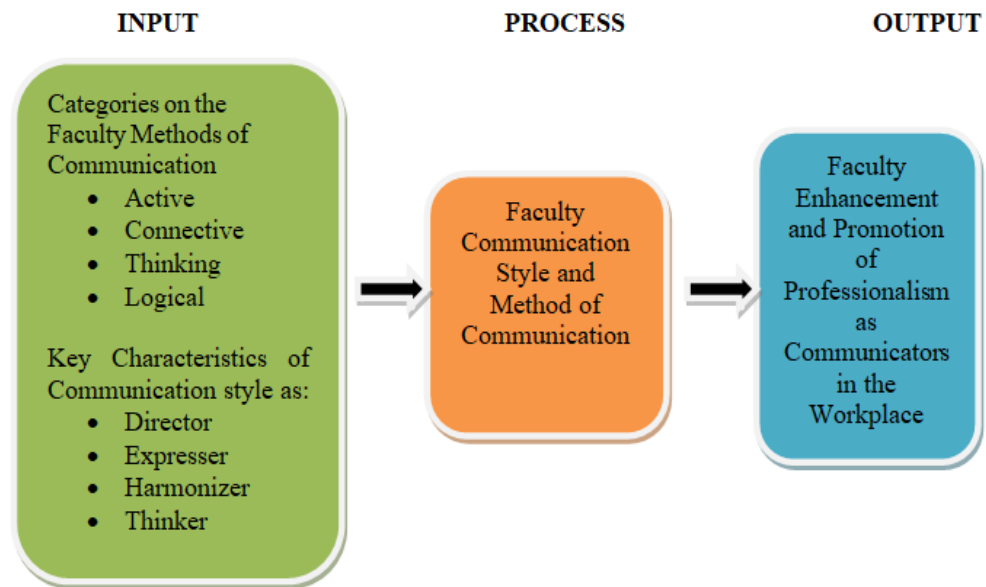
There are thirteen universities and colleges in the Kingdom of Bahrain with faculty coming from different regions and countries. Cultural diversity particularly communication styles could be an issue when teachers come together in one workplace. It is assumed that despite varying backgrounds, faculty preference of communication style will not affect professionalism.

#### Scope and Limitation

This study identified the faculty communication styles and methods for enhancing and promoting professionalism. Randomly selected faculty from different schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain was utilized as respondents.

#### Conceptual Paradigm

The following paradigm was conceptualized for clearer illustration of the study's framework.



### Significance of the Study

This study will be beneficial for all administrators, faculty, and staff in assessing communication styles for healthier environs that emanate high regard in professionalism through effective workplace communication.

### Definition of Terms

The following terms have been operationally and conceptually defined for better understanding of the study.

**Professionalism in Communication.** It refers to the degree of expectations which are significant to the communication styles and methods to all members of the organization

**Methods of Communication.** The process where communicative transactions are processed according to the characteristics of the communicator.

**Workplace Communication.** A communication route that allows organization to determine the identify the level of morale, productivity and commitment of the employees/staff.

**Workplace Communication Styles.** It is an essential life skill that an employee should be able to get naturally involved in the communication process in the workplace.

## Chapter 2

### 1. Literature Review

The effective and efficient workplace communication is based in the organization's structure and culture which are interrelated. Ergen (2010) said that organizations should have communication channels with clear policies which serve as guides to monitor employees involvement to the mission and vision of the organization in general. Involvement entails the communication styles and methods of the employees [9].

Hoffman (2012) states that communication styles do not fall within specific framework. Understanding the various ways of communication frees one to change the ways to communicate [10].

Donovan and MacIntyre (2009) said that the degree to which communication apprehension and self- perceived competence predict willingness to communicate varies with age. Age is a significant predictor of willingness to communicate among women. Among men, self- perceived competence emerges as a significant predictor as well [11].

Belonwu (2013) emphasizes efficient communication gets word done quickly and professionally. Organizations should have teams that work harmoniously to enjoy a healthy and peaceful work environment. Transparency is an effective remedy in avoiding misunderstanding and miscommunication; hence, tasks and assignments will be accomplished smoothly [12].

### Methodology

This study used the descriptive method. More than a hand in data gathering, descriptive method, it describes the existing conditions or variables in the given situation. It supports the facts on obtaining adequate interpretation as well. This is effective in analyzing the

significant differences in arriving sound impressions from the variables which are subject for statistical treatments.

The researcher adapted the instruments from Communication Style Checklist made available on the net by Microsoft Word Microsoft Word - fine-communications-style-checklist.doc (2013) [13].

A dry-run was administered at AMAIUB to facilitate the reliability of the assessment. Eventually, the instruments were distributed to the rest of the target respondents this 1<sup>st</sup> trimester AY 2017-2018. Tabulation of the data took place after retrieving the instruments.

#### Data Analysis

ANOVA was used to determine the significant difference between the respondents' assessment of their communication styles and communication methods to their profile (age, years of service in the academe and educational attainment). Independent samples test was used to determine the significant difference between the respondents' assessment of their communication styles and communication methods to their profile (gender). Least Significance Difference (LSD) was used to find out which among the results differ from each where significant differences were noted (multiple differences). Mean was used to determine the ranks of the respondents' communication styles and methods.

#### Results and Discussion

##### Findings

	Mean	Rank
Active	3.2238	2
Connective	3.1726	3

Thinking	2.8963	4
Logical	3.4238	1

Table 1: Respondents' Characteristics as Categorized in the Communication Styles

Table 1 above reveals that most of the respondents are logical communicators -rank 1 with the mean of 3.4238 and active communicators-rank 2 with the mean of 3.2238 and some are connective communicators-rank 3 with the mean of 3.1726 and the least are the thinking communicators-rank 4 with the mean of 2.8963. Logical communicators can be recognized by their respectful and practical manner. Ergen (2010) stated that full responsibility to administer the communication process is to define the communication channels and to form the policies which should be followed; in other words, to create the communication's framework.

Table 2: Respondents' characteristics as categorized in the communication methods

	Mean	Rank
Director	2.51846	4
Expresser	3.44761	3
Harmonizer	3.47777	2
Thinker	3.49972	1

Table 2 above shows that most of the respondents are thinkers (rank 1) in their communication styles with the mean of 3.499 and harmonizers as well with the mean of 3.477 (rank 2) Some are expressers with the mean of 3.4476 (rank 3) and the least fall under the category of a directors with the mean of 2.5181 (rank 4). Belonwu (2013)

emphasizes efficient communication gets word done quickly and professionally. Organizations should have teams that work harmoniously to enjoy a healthy and peaceful work environment. Misunderstanding and miscommunication can be avoided and eliminated if there is transparency in the process of accomplishing tasks and assignments

Table 3a: Difference between the respondents’ assessment of their communication style to their age

Style		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Active	Between Groups	.904	6	.151	.200	.975 No significant difference
	Within Groups	47.387	63	.752		
	Total	48.291	69			
Connective	Between Groups	4.958	6	.826	1.103	.371 No significant difference
	Within Groups	47.207	63	.749		
	Total	52.165	69			
Thinking	Between Groups	1.871	6	.312	.533	.781 No significant difference
	Within Groups	36.865	63	.585		
	Total	38.736	69			
Logical	Between Groups	2.672	6	.445	.649	.690 No significant difference
	Within Groups	43.201	63	.686		
	Total	45.872	69			

Table 3b: Difference between the respondents’ assessment of their communication style to their gender

Styles	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Active	68	.533 No significant difference
Connective	68	.770 No significant difference
Thinking	68	.765 No significant difference
Logical	68	.702 No significant difference

Table 3c: Difference between the respondents’ assessment of their communication style to their educational attainment

Styles		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Active	Between Groups	1.006	2	.503	.713	.494
	Within Groups	47.286	67	.706		No significant difference
	Total	48.291	69			
Connective	Between Groups	.092	2	.046	.059	
	Within Groups	52.074	67	.777		No significant difference
	Total	52.165	69			
Thinking	Between Groups	1.175	2	.587	1.048	
	Within Groups	37.561	67	.561		No significant difference
	Total	38.736	69			
Logical	Between Groups	.122	2	.061	.089	
	Within Groups	45.751	67	.683		No significant difference
	Total	45.872	69			

Table 3d: Difference between the respondents' assessment of their communication style to their years of service to the academe

Styles		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Active	Between Groups	6.439	5	1.288	1.969	.095
	Within Groups	41.853	64	.654		No significant difference
	Total	48.291	69			
Connective	Between Groups	4.078	5	.816	1.086	
	Within Groups	48.087	64	.751		No significant difference
	Total	52.165	69			
Thinking	Between Groups	4.310	5	.862	1.602	
	Within Groups	34.426	64	.538		No significant difference
	Total	38.736	69			
Logical	Between Groups	8.291	5	1.658	2.824	
	Within Groups	37.581	64	.587		Statistically significant
	Total	45.872	69			

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Tables 3a to 3c give full views that there is no significant difference on the respondents' communication styles according to age, gender, number of years and in their level of educational attainment; however, as shown in table 3d-there is significant difference of .023 between and between groups in the logical communicators in their communication styles according to the number of years in the academe. Hoffman (2012) states that

communication styles do not fall within specific framework. Understanding the various ways of communication frees one to change the ways to communicate.

Table 4: Difference between the respondents' assessment of their communication methods to their age

Methods		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Director	Between Groups	6.916	6	1.153	3.337	.006*
	Within Groups	21.764	63	.345		Statistically significant
	Total	28.680	69			
Expresser	Between Groups	2.560	6	.427	1.327	
	Within Groups	20.265	63	.322		No significant difference
	Total	22.825	69			
Harmonizer	Between Groups	1.745	6	.291	.404	
	Within Groups	45.293	63	.719		No significant difference
	Total	47.038	69			
Thinker	Between Groups	2.853	6	.476	.784	
	Within Groups	38.193	63	.606		No significant difference
	Total	41.047	69			

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4 shows a statistically significant difference of .006 between the director-respondents' communication methods to their age. Donovan and McIntyre (2009) said that the degree to which communication apprehension and self-perceived competence predict willingness to communicate varies with age. Age is a significant predictor of willingness to communicate among women. Among men, self-perceived competence emerges as a significant predictor as well.

**Table 5a: Difference between the respondents' assessment of their communication methods to their gender**

Methods	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Director	68	.206 No significant difference
Expresser	68	.987 No significant difference
Harmonizer	68	.358 No significant difference
Thinker	68	.423 No significant difference

**Table 5b: Difference between the respondents' assessment of their communication methods to their years of service**

Methods		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Director	Between Groups	.644	5	.129	.294	.915 No significant difference
	Within Groups	28.036	64	.438		
	Total	28.680	69			
Expresser	Between Groups	.701	5	.140	.406	.843 No significant difference
	Within Groups	22.124	64	.346		
	Total	22.825	69			
Harmonizer	Between Groups	2.425	5	.485	.696	.629 No significant difference
	Within Groups	44.613	64	.697		
	Total	47.038	69			
Thinker	Between Groups	7.199	5	1.440	2.723	.027* No significant difference
	Within Groups	33.847	64	.529		
	Total	41.047	69			

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

**Table 5c: Difference between the respondents' assessment of their communication methods to their educational attainment**

Methods		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Director	Between Groups	.493	2	.247	.586	.559 No significant difference
	Within Groups	28.187	67	.421		
	Total	28.680	69			
Expresser	Between Groups	1.123	2	.561	1.733	.185 No significant difference
	Within Groups	21.703	67	.324		
	Total	22.825	69			
Harmonizer	Between Groups	.807	2	.404	.585	.560 No significant difference
	Within Groups	46.231	67	.690		
	Total	47.038	69			
Thinker	Between Groups	.689	2	.344	.572	.567 No significant difference
	Within Groups	40.358	67	.602		
	Total	41.047	69			

Tables 5a-5c reveals no difference between the respondents' communication methods to their gender, years of service and educational attainment. The State of Medical Education and Practice (2015) reported similar findings which state that there is evidence that the differences in educational attainment are not explained by bias from assessors, though the precise reasons for variation in educational attainment are still unclear.

Table 6: Difference among the respondents' communication methods and communication styles

#### Paired Samples Test

Pair		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
ive	Director	-5.558	69	.000*
nective	Expresser	2.473	69	.016*
nking	Harmonizer	5.165	69	.000*
ical	Thinker	.725	69	.471

\* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 6 divulges significant differences among the respondents' communication methods and style. As shown in the table above, respondent communicators differ from active style to director method, connective to expresser and thinking to harmonizer. Further it shows the implications that the effective and efficient workplace communication is based in the organization's structure and culture which are interrelated as illustrated by Ergen (2010). The logical style reveals no significant difference. Tables 1 and 2 support this result since both of them manifest the primary characteristics of the communicators with regards to their communication styles and methods.

## Conclusion

1. The Logical Communicators expounds current issues based from their past experiences while the Active Communicators articulates their point of views with certainties. The Connective Communicators count in the ideas of the others in the discussion-making them approachable and empathetic. The Thinking Communicators on the other hand are very objective dealing with facts and figures as support of their conviction.
2. The Thinkers are focused on getting things done right. Their exacting sense of detail drives them to ask lots of questions. They like to discuss these details with others, to make sure they have considered every angle. They ask questions and revel in details. Close to the thinkers are the harmonizers. The Thinkers are meticulous. They are very inquisitive; they seek opinions of other in exacting sense and reveling details. On the other hand, the Harmonizers speak are cordial; they can maintain people working happily together. The Expressers are fond of body language and facial expressions to emphasize their points; however, they tend to get tactless and finds hard to listen and to focus on a single topic. The Director talks about actions and engaging only in small talks even to social niceties. They are goal hitters and always on the run to accomplish tasks.
3. Communicators as they progress understand and appreciate professional roles; thereby, they can communicate effectively in their tenure as professionals.
4. Communicators with Director Method are on their preliminary years in the workplace where there is considered a critical time of professional practice requiring a specific set of competencies for communication.
5. Communicators can practice their communication methods according to their preferences and regardless of their educational attainment.

6. Communicators vary in their communication styles and methods-making them flexible to their interactions in the workplace. The key to professional success is thru effective interaction. Communication skills can impact success regardless of designation or position in an organization.

7.

#### Recommendations

1. Communicators in the workplace should always support their opinions-making them credible.
2. Communicators should be always well organized in communicating their ideas.
3. Communicators should consider every encounter in the workplace a learning experience; hence they gain insights that make them better communicators.
4. Communicators should take advantage of the opportunity to get involved in workplace communication particularly during their prime years in the workplace. They should ponder on key issues and get involved in the transaction.
5. Communicators should be open to any communication situation where they share pleasantries with the others
6. Communicators should adjust to the norms of the workplace to be able to enjoy workplace communication. With leveraged communication resources, they can drill down communication routes towards better understanding of one another in the workplace.

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